

**A report on the education workforce training schemes of
The National Centre for Learning Welsh**

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by

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
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This report is also available in Welsh

Introduction

During 2025-26, the National Centre for Learning Welsh (NCLW) received £1,000,000 of funding from the Welsh Government's Education Department to provide Welsh language training to the statutory education workforce. In September 2025, the intensive provision of the [Sabbatical Scheme](#) was also transferred to the Centre with funding of £1,283,497.

This funding is used to implement the objective of the Centre's [Strategic Plan 2024-2026](#) to develop Learn Welsh Education Workforce as a cohesive national programme which includes a range of training and support for prospective teachers, teachers, classroom assistants and support staff in schools.

The Learn Welsh Education Workforce scheme operates on the basis of three strategic aims, namely:

- Ensure support for local authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plans by supporting schools or clusters where linguistic change is targeted, for example to change the language category.
- Ensure support for the [Welsh Language and Education \(Wales\) Act 2025](#) by supporting schools to meet the Welsh language learning goals for each language category. For example, English-medium schools (or Primarily English language, partly Welsh as they are described in the Act) are expected to provide at least 10% of their education and training through the medium of Welsh by 2030.
- Introduce Welsh language teaching methodology which is used successfully with adults to influence the practice of teaching and acquiring the Welsh language in schools and improve the offer for children and young people.

The scheme also supports the aims of the Welsh Government's [Welsh in education workforce plan](#).

A variety of delivery models are offered, such as self-study, tutor-led courses, residential courses and intensive sabbatical courses. Free mainstream courses are also provided for education workforce practitioners.

There is a deliberate emphasis on tailoring the content of the courses for the purposes of education practitioners so that they can transfer what they have learned to their work with pupils.

The NCLW received £500,000 of funding from Welsh Government in 2024-25 to establish the scheme and education workforce tutors were employed during 2025-26 for this work

During 2024-25, there were 20,455 learners in the Learn Welsh sector and, of those, 2,974 were learners on education workforce training courses. Around 10% of the learning activities in the sector were training for the education workforce.

Part 5 of the [Welsh Language and Education \(Wales\) Act 2025](#) changes the status of the National Centre for Learning Welsh (NCLW) from August 2027 to be a statutory body called the National Institute for Learning Welsh, with the aim of facilitating and supporting lifelong Welsh language learning.

Its functions will include:

- plan for the development of the education workforce for the purpose of improving Welsh language teaching methods
- make arrangements to provide opportunities to learn Welsh for the education workforce
- make arrangements to improve ability levels in Welsh amongst the education workforce.

Methodology

The aim of this longitudinal inspection is to evaluate the quality and initial impact of training schemes for the statutory education workforce under the auspices of the NCLW.

The field work was conducted during the spring term 2026. Relevant evidence and observations from education workforce training sessions were also scrutinised during the core inspection of Learn Wales Swansea Bay Area which was conducted in November 2025.

The sample includes observations of face-to-face and online sessions at different levels (pre-entry to proficiency), weekly courses, intensive courses and residential courses.

We held professional discussions with learners (namely, education practitioners in this context), tutors and senior staff in primary and secondary schools to discuss the impact of the courses on members of the education workforce in terms of acquiring the Welsh language and their use of it with pupils.

Five Learn Welsh providers were visited between February and March 2026:

- Learn Welsh North West
- Learn Welsh North East
- Learn Welsh Nant Gwrtheyrn

- Learn Welsh Ceredigion Powys Carmarthenshire
- Learn Welsh Gwent

Two providers of the sabbatical scheme were visited, namely:

- The School of Welsh, Cardiff University
- Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University

During the visits, we met with the heads and relevant officers from providers and senior managers of their host institutions. We also held meetings with senior officers of the NCLW.

Summary

In a short period of time, the NCLW has established strategic, comprehensive and flexible provision to support the education workforce in Wales to develop their Welsh language skills and their ability to use the language effectively in their work. The programme offers a wide range of learning opportunities for practitioners in schools at all levels of linguistic ability, including self-study courses, tutor-led courses, residential courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn and intensive (sabbatical) learning schemes.

Courses are designed specifically to meet the needs of the education workforce and combine the development of language skills with an understanding of various pedagogies and methodologies in supporting their language acquisition. However, there are limitations that are beyond the responsibilities of the NCLW, such as the allocation of insufficient supply funding to release practitioners in schools to learn Welsh that continues to prevent them from being released to attend sessions. This limits the availability and attainment of practitioners as they learn Welsh. This, in turn, limits the ability of tutors and the full impact of provision on supporting practitioners to develop their Welsh language learning skills constructively over time.

Most tutors have valuable teaching experience and create supportive learning environments that build practitioners' confidence in learning Welsh. They use a suitable range of language acquisition strategies and contextualise learning successfully to school situations and practitioners' day-to-day work. As a result, many practitioners make sound progress, particularly in their oral skills, and develop the confidence to use the Welsh language with pupils, colleagues and parents. However, the quality of teaching in terms of promoting practitioners' independent and natural use of the Welsh language is too varied. In a minority of sessions, tutors are over-reliant on translating or on using English, which limits opportunities for practitioners to develop confidence and fluency to use the Welsh language increasingly spontaneously with their pupils.

The intensive learning (sabbatical) and residential courses are extremely strong features of the provision. Tutors use valuable immersion methods that develop practitioners' language skills, cultural knowledge and pedagogical practices successfully. In general, tutors support leaders in schools that are moving along the language continuum valuably, which contributes positively to achieving the aims of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).

On the whole, one of the main obstacles to the continuous progress of practitioners is the lack of consistency in aftercare arrangements provided by local authorities and schools once practitioners have completed courses. The quality and nature of the support they provide varies considerably. In many cases, arrangements for supporting practitioners to maintain and develop their use of the Welsh language are not strategic and systematic enough. As a result, it is difficult to measure the full effect of provision on practitioners' professional use of the Welsh language and their deeper understanding of effective pedagogy and methodology for learning Welsh over time. Generally, aftercare arrangements are not co-ordinated and consistent enough to strengthen practitioners' confidence and increase the use of the Welsh language in their day-to-day work with pupils.

The NCLW's leadership is sound and based on clear strategic planning, effective co-operation with national partners and local authorities, and relevant quality assurance arrangements. Leaders use data and a variety of models for planning and delivering provision to support them in aiming to ensure that provision is accessible to practitioners in schools and responds to local needs.

The Welsh Government allocates funding to the NCLW to plan and deliver provision annually. This prevents leaders from planning strategically enough in the long term.

Recommendations for the National Centre for Learning Welsh

- R1 Ensure consistency in the use of effective Welsh for Adults pedagogy and methodology across the provision to support practitioners to acquire the Welsh language successfully and to use it with increasing confidence in their own teaching with their pupils
- R2 Jointly with the Welsh Government, develop a new strategic and effective aftercare system to support practitioners in using their language skills
- R3 Continue to work strategically with local authorities to develop the offer for the statutory education workforce and develop methods of measuring the effect of provision on practitioners, and on their pupils

- R4 Work with the Welsh Government to develop a funding model that supports long-term plans, including a funding system to release practitioners to learn Welsh.

Main evaluation

Provision

Although the NCLW had not received specific funding to provide training for the education workforce at the time, in August 2022, a portal was launched on the National Centre for Learning Welsh (NCLW) website to direct the education workforce to the Welsh language learning training available to them. The [Education Workforce Portal | Learn Welsh](#) has now developed into a useful platform that provides key information and clear guidance for prospective practitioners who are keen to learn Welsh, in addition to providing access to self-study courses.

The strategic aim of courses for education workforce practitioners is different from mainstream courses in the Learn Welsh sector as they aim to improve their language skills, in addition to introducing them to effective language acquisition methodology to use with their pupils.

[The Education Workforce Offer: youtube.com](#)

Free courses are offered at all levels of the [Language competency framework for education practitioners](#), including taster courses, self-study, tutor-led courses, residential courses and intensive sabbatical courses. Education practitioners can also attend mainstream courses free of charge. The framework aligns clearly with the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages used by the Learn Welsh sector and the Welsh ability codes used by the School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC).

Self-study courses are an extremely useful resource for practitioners who cannot attend a regular class or as a revision resource to reinforce learners' understanding.

Courses are offered that are tailored to different needs, for example [Everyday Welsh \(Primary Sector\)](#) and [Everyday Welsh \(Secondary Sector\)](#) which introduce everyday language to be used in schools. Courses are provided at different levels from [Entry Level for Teachers](#) to the [Cymraeg Cywrain Course](#) to enable staff to use grammatical elements correctly within contexts such as writing minutes, reports and letters. The [advanced courses for Foundation Learning Teaching Assistants - Language Models](#) have been tailored recognising the importance of ensuring that practitioners who are learning assistants in schools are robust language models.

Education workforce training tutors

The NCLW has acted strategically by inviting applications from providers who already implement the education workforce training framework to employ [education workforce tutors](#) who work across different local authorities in Wales. For example, Learn Welsh Swansea Bay Area is responsible for teaching the workforce in the counties of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend, while Learn Welsh Gwent is responsible for the counties of Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Newport and Monmouthshire.

A majority of education workforce tutors have previous experience of being schoolteachers which, on the whole, is beneficial in terms of understanding what teachers and assistants need in practice to teach the Welsh language effectively. Tutors have either followed or are currently following the 'Dechrau Dysgu' course. However, there are not enough education workforce tutors across Wales, and this causes difficulty in developing the offer more widely. This limits regular and inclusive opportunities for practitioners to access provision to support them in learning Welsh.

One of the distinctive qualities of the work of these tutors is the way in which they work with school leaders to understand and meet the linguistic needs of the workforce. For example, a Learn Welsh North East tutor works closely with Flintshire's advisory teachers to work with practitioners in a cluster of primary schools. The tutor's knowledge of practitioners' Welsh language learning needs contributes positively to supporting them in making progress in their skills, along with measuring the effect of provision on teaching and learning.

Valuable support is provided in specific schools to help them to move along the language continuum and change linguistic category in line with the expectations of the local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs). The NCLW provides funding that is equivalent to eight full-time tutors across Wales, in addition to one resident tutor at Nant Gwrtheyrn. For example, Learn Welsh Ceredigion Powys Carmarthenshire provides a part-time tutor at Ysgol Bro Caereinion, Powys to facilitate and support the school's development along the language continuum, support practitioners to gain confidence in the Welsh language and enable them to be increasingly confident in teaching through the medium of Welsh. Support is provided for leaders to plan and map progress in staff's language skills across the range of Learn Welsh levels, and to do so over a specific period of time.

In the best cases, in a short period of time, provision supports learners to improve their Welsh language skills, particularly their Welsh speaking skills. In addition, through relevant action plans within individual schools, practitioners and pupils are given more

opportunities to learn about Welsh culture, for example as tutors and school leaders work together to organise for performers to come and present creative sessions with pupils.

Residential courses

Learn Welsh Nant Gwrtheyrn provides residential courses at all levels. This includes courses held over five days and an innovative arrangement of offering hybrid courses, which is an opportunity for practitioners to complete an entire level course over a period of seven weeks, that includes two residential weeks with one at the beginning of the period and the other at the end, and five virtual lessons in between. This arrangement works well for practitioners and their employers.

The provider adapts the Nant Gwrtheyrn coursebooks specifically for the purposes of the education workforce, with the aim of presenting the course at a pace that is suitable for learning, while immersing learners in the language as part of their experience of learning Welsh.

Spotlight: Learning by doing – Nant Gwrtheyrn

Through the unique context of Nant Gwrtheyrn, the provider organises extremely valuable experiences for learners to continue to acquire the Welsh language in rich Welsh contexts. For example, a clog dancing workshop, a folk dancing '*twmpath*' and a session with a local artist who sings contemporary songs and traditional Welsh hymns are held with practitioners.

Around halfway through the residential week, practitioners also have a variety of experiences in the local community. For example, tutors organise for practitioners to visit local attractions, purchase stamps at a post office through the medium of Welsh and take part in an art workshop. This supports practitioners to gain confidence and communicate increasingly confidently in Welsh with members of the community. These experiences also provide them with new ideas as education practitioners about how they can present the Welsh language to their pupils in practical and creative contexts.

Intensive Learning (Sabbatical)

Since September 2025, the NCLW is responsible for the sabbatical schemes which are run by three providers on a geographical basis:

- Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University in north Wales
- Rhagoriaith, University of Wales Trinity St David in mid and west Wales
- School of Welsh, Cardiff University in south Wales

Ten-point eight (10.8) tutors are employed through the Intensive Learning (sabbatical) scheme. These courses provide very beneficial intensive learning experiences in face-to-face and virtual sessions which include inventive elements of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

The providers' main offer are the full-time intensive courses held over two school terms, namely the autumn term and spring term. These courses are organised for practitioners in English-medium primary schools who already have basic Welsh language skills and teach either the youngest or the oldest pupils. These courses lead to an 80-credit qualification at level 6.

In addition to acquiring the Welsh language up to intermediate level, practitioners receive specialist and extremely valuable input in effective pedagogy. The aim of the scheme is not only to teach practitioners in terms of language skills, but also to equip them to be successful practitioners in terms of teaching and integrating the Welsh language across the curriculum in their own schools. They are given rigorous training on how to model and practise vocabulary and language patterns and extend them meaningfully across the learning areas. To this end, as part of the teaching and learning process, they spend five days during the spring term back in their own schools to put what they have learned into practice and then reflect on what has been beneficial.

During the summer term, each provider offers a range of different courses for practitioners at entry to proficiency level in the primary and secondary sectors. Specific cohorts are also targeted, namely teaching assistants, physical education teachers and Welsh second language teachers.

The NCLW has developed efficient procedures to select the most suitable practitioners, in terms of linguistic planning within their schools. However, despite purposeful strategic planning between the Centre and authorities, schools still do not always send the most suitable staff on these courses, namely those key practitioners who have the potential to increase the use of the Welsh language in their schools. In addition, although supply funding is available, it is not sufficient to fund the true cost of supply and, too often, this prevents school leaders from releasing practitioners to attend valuable training.

Initial teacher education

The NCLW is not responsible for this provision nationally. However, the NCLW works proactively with Bangor University and Cardiff Metropolitan University to ensure additional provision to the expected 35 hours during initial teacher education courses for BA Education undergraduates. This provision was not evaluated during this inspection as initial teacher education is inspected as a separate specific sector.

Estyn published a relevant report in September 2023, in which it is highlighted that the education workforce training has not had a positive enough effect on the language skills and pedagogy of students on initial teacher education courses.

[Support for Welsh in Initial Teacher Education: How initial teacher education partnerships support student teachers to improve their Welsh language skills, including teaching through the medium of Welsh](#)

Following this report, the NCLW provided a Learn Welsh resource equivalent to 35 hours to initial teacher education partnerships at all levels of the competency framework.

Data

2024-25 was the first full year of implementing the scheme for the education workforce. During 2024-25, there were 20,455 learners in the Learn Welsh sector and, of those, 2,974 were learners on education workforce training courses. Around 10% of learning activities in the sector were training for the education workforce.

There is a clear variation in the types of provision available across all education workforce training schemes. Completion rates on residential courses are much higher than on self-study courses but, on the whole, a majority of education practitioners on the different courses complete their courses.

Teaching

Most tutors forge positive and supportive working relationships with practitioners, which enables them to identify the needs of different cohorts effectively and tailor their teaching accordingly. The energy and enthusiasm of many tutors are extremely effective and contribute positively to creating safe and supportive learning environments where practitioners gain the confidence to use the Welsh language constructively over time. In most cases, tutors model the Welsh language effectively and use an appropriate range of methods to support language acquisition, including gestures, repetition, drilling, questioning and using contexts that are relevant to practitioners' day-to-day work with pupils. Many tutors adapt activities skilfully to ensure relevance to the work of practitioners and build on their previous skills increasingly over time. As a result, many practitioners develop increasing confidence to use the Welsh language in their professional work.

In most provisions, tutors use language acquisition methodology skilfully and vary learning activities effectively to engage and maintain the interest and engagement of practitioners. Many place a clear emphasis on encouraging increasing use of the Welsh language in the classroom and more widely within the school community. Many tutors

also support practitioners to link previous learning with new patterns and use methods such as re-shaping language to build confidence and accuracy. The pace of sessions is often appropriate and learning moves smoothly between a variety of activities, including auditory activities, games, group work and digital apps. This helps many practitioners to maintain their interest and develop their oral skills with increasing confidence.

Contextualising learning is a clear strength across much of the provision. In most cases, tutors tailor vocabulary, language patterns and activities skilfully to reflect learners' roles and responsibilities in the workplace. For example, many tutors use the 'Cymraeg bob dydd' scheme as a sound basis for teaching and presenting language that is relevant to the work of teachers and assistants in schools. In a few strong cases, tutors act skilfully as facilitators in supporting practitioners to jointly plan activities that they can use with pupils in their own classes. A beneficial focus on micro-learning activities in some provisions also enables practitioners to deliver short activities and reflect on their use of pedagogical and language strategies.

Many tutors benefit from valuable opportunities to work with colleagues, including regular meetings to share experiences, discuss challenges and exchange resources. Many also bring an extensive background in education to their work and foster robust and practical learning experiences for practitioners. In a few strong provisions, practitioners are introduced purposefully to aspects of Welsh culture, history and the arts, which helps them to develop a stronger sense of belonging to the Welsh language and encourages them to use the language outside the classroom.

However, across the provision, the quality of teaching in terms of promoting independent and natural use of the Welsh language varies. In a minority of sessions, practitioners are over-reliant on written support, translation and the tutor's use of English. As a result, practitioners are not always given enough regular opportunities to speak and practise Welsh independently through natural conversations or pair and group work. In a few cases, tutors repeat vocabulary or instructions in English unnecessarily, which slows the development of practitioners' language skills and limits opportunities for them to develop language acquisition strategies more independently.

In a minority of sessions, tutors over-direct the learning, with too much emphasis on presenting content or explaining teaching methods, rather than giving practitioners enough time to practise and use the Welsh language themselves. At times, tutors try to deliver too much content in one session, which means that the information load is too broad and intensive for a few practitioners. In a few sessions, contextualising language for the work of schools or specific areas of learning has also not been developed consistently enough, particularly in Confidence Building sessions. As a result, a few practitioners do not

develop enough confidence to use the Welsh language naturally as an integral part of their teaching over time.

In a minority of cases, teaching practices reflect more traditional methods that do not always align well enough with the most effective practices of the Welsh for Adults sector. For example, over-reliance on translating or explaining in English reduces opportunities for practitioners to develop oral fluency and confidence when using the Welsh language spontaneously. In a few sessions, there is also not enough focus on supporting practitioners to develop correct pronunciation through regular oral practice and purposeful drilling.

Learning

From their different starting points, many practitioners make sound progress in their Welsh language skills, particularly in their oracy. Most develop a sound understanding of language patterns and grammatical rules, including mutations and various verb forms, and are able to apply these appropriately in structured activities. Practitioners often show a strong interest in how Welsh works as a language, and this has a positive effect on their ability to develop increasing accuracy when speaking and writing. Many usually pronounce correctly and, with the support of the tutor, they communicate with increasing confidence and use vocabulary and language patterns that are relevant to their professional contexts.

In most sessions, practitioners demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to their learning. They engage well with activities, demonstrate perseverance and are willing to try even when they are not completely confident. Most listen attentively to each other when working in pairs or groups and build progressively on their use of vocabulary and language patterns. In many cases, practitioners begin to speak Welsh more spontaneously during sessions and a few use Welsh naturally with the tutor and their fellow learners. Nearly all practitioners recognise the personal and professional value of learning Welsh and are keen to continue developing their skills over time.

Most learners on Entry level courses build confidence and independence when using the Welsh language and succeed in transferring their previous knowledge to new situations. This strengthens their communication skills and helps them to develop a more effective long-term memory for vocabulary and language patterns. Over time, most practitioners who follow Advanced and Proficiency courses develop more accuracy and fluency when using the Welsh language in practical and professional contexts. In a few notable cases, practitioners combine skills effectively when building extended sentences and use increasingly complex grammatical patterns correctly in oral activities.

Nearly all practitioners' reading skills develop appropriately and enable them to participate confidently in learning activities, for example when reading scripts or short texts aloud with appropriate pronunciation and intonation. Many practitioners also begin to use the Welsh language with their pupils and colleagues in the workplace. On intensive (sabbatical) learning courses, formally assessed micro-learning work provides very sound evidence of practitioners' development in terms of language acquisition and effective pedagogy.

However, across the provision, the ability of practitioners to use the Welsh language independently and naturally is too variable. In a minority of sessions, practitioners mainly use Welsh only during specific activities and tend to turn to English when interacting more informally with each other. As a result, a minority do not develop enough confidence to hold a natural or extended conversation in Welsh. In a very few cases, practitioners are passive for too long and do not participate actively in their learning consistently enough.

Across many provisions, a few practitioners continue to face difficulties with pronunciation, particularly when pronouncing certain sounds, vowels and double letters correctly. A very few practitioners often hesitate when trying to retrieve vocabulary and language patterns, which affects their fluency and confidence when speaking. Additionally, where attendance or punctuality is poor, or where practitioners are withdrawn from sessions regularly due to work commitments, the progress they make is often too slow. This is most relevant in the case of leaders and practitioners who have wider responsibilities in the workplace.

On the whole, one of the main obstacles to the continuous progress of practitioners is a lack of consistency in aftercare arrangements after completing courses. The NCLW is not responsible for this element and the quality and nature of the support provided by schools and local authorities varies considerably. In many cases, arrangements for supporting practitioners to maintain and develop their use of the Welsh language are not strategic and systematic enough. As a result, it is difficult to measure the full effect of provision on practitioners' professional use of the Welsh language and their deeper understanding of the effective pedagogy and methodology of learning Welsh over time. Aftercare arrangements are not co-ordinated or consistent enough to strengthen practitioners' confidence and increase the use of the Welsh language in their day-to-day work with pupils.

Through the 'My Learning' platform, practitioners have access to useful resources and relevant opportunities to complete exercises in the 'My Tasks' section.

Spotlight: Contextualising content

A notable element of the sabbatical courses is the way in which tutors contextualise the content of the courses intelligently to develop practitioners' language skills and train them to apply the language within different areas of experience.

Tutors at the School of Welsh, Cardiff University weave elements of reading stories, mathematics, science and geography skilfully into activities with the aim of ensuring that practitioners have the confidence to achieve the same. Trips are organised to events such as a pantomime and to locations such as St Fagan's National Museum of History, in order to demonstrate how to lead a school trip through the medium of Welsh.

Tutors at Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University present a lesson on comparing Patagonia and Wales, which leads to a discussion among practitioners about how they could adapt the activity to develop pupils' numeracy through the medium of Welsh.

As a result, provision plans purposefully to develop practitioners' language skills, pedagogy and understanding of language acquisition.

Management and leadership nationally and locally

The National Centre for Learning Welsh

The NCLW has shown clear and purposeful strategic action, based on an analysis of the historical provision that was available before it received funding to provide training, in addition to the needs of the education workforce. Following a study which identified that there were too many short and inconsistent programmes, the NCLW has developed one new national programme based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The CEFR will form the basis of the new Welsh Language Code to be published by Welsh Government in autumn 2026. The establishment of a new directorate within the NCLW, for Young People, Families and the Education Workforce in Easter 2023, has also strengthened the internal structure, with staff responsibilities defined clearly to support effective leadership and accountability. Courses are provided at all levels of the [Language competency framework for education practitioners](#), including taster courses, self-study, tutor-led courses, residential courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn and block courses for specific schools and clusters.

The Learn Welsh Education Workforce scheme is based on a series of core principles designed to ensure that provision is effective, accessible and relevant to the needs of the education workforce in Wales. One of the main principles is the use of various delivery models which offer a high level of flexibility to schools and education settings. By providing a variety of delivery methods, such as face-to-face learning, online sessions and blended learning methods, schools can choose the model that best suits the needs of their

staff, their timetables and their local context. This flexibility enables greater participation and helps to ensure that opportunities to learn Welsh are accessible to all members of the workforce.

The scheme also offers a comprehensive range of courses which are contextualised fully to the requirements of working in a school. This ensures that the content of the courses is relevant and practical for practitioners, focusing on situations and vocabulary that arise naturally within everyday school life. By linking learning directly to the roles and responsibilities of education practitioners, the scheme supports practitioners to develop confidence in using the Welsh language in professional contexts, whether that be in the classroom, communicating with parents or when working with colleagues.

Courses are also based on a methodology that can have a positive influence on practices in the classroom. The aim of this approach is not only to develop the language skills of the workforce, but also to encourage active use of the Welsh language in daily teaching and learning. By introducing practical strategies and practices that can be transferred directly to the classroom, the scheme contributes to strengthening the Welsh language as a natural part of school culture and supports the wider aim of increasing the use of the Welsh language across the education system.

During 2025-2026, the Welsh Government's Sabbatical Scheme was transferred to become part of the programme for the Education Workforce. Strategic work has also taken place with local authorities to ensure that training is aligned with Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).

Spotlight: Education workforce tutors based in specific schools

Learn Welsh North West received funding to place a part-time tutor at Ysgol y Gogarth, a special school maintained by Conwy County Borough Council. The school prioritises developing the Welsh language skills of its workforce as part of its commitment to bilingualism, cultural identity and the concept of '*cynefin*'.

By working with the school and the local authority, the tutor assesses and monitors the linguistic progress of staff, provides Learn Welsh sessions tailored for different levels, and offers practical support to practitioners in using the Welsh language in their everyday work. Currently, practitioners within eight groups receive regular provision through a timetable which enables staff to attend sessions regularly.

According to the school's self-evaluation, this work is already having a positive effect, with staff and pupils more confident when using the Welsh language in formal and informal situations. The school also notes that communication with first-language Welsh pupils has improved as a result of the provision.

The NCLW works strategically and effectively with a wide range of key partners, including the Education Workforce Council and the Association of Directors of Education in Wales. This co-operation contributes robustly to developing coherent provision and to strengthening the support available to the education workforce at a national level. A forward planning and monitoring 'dashboard' is used effectively to track where and by whom training is conducted across local authorities and schools.

Despite the purposeful strategic co-operation between the NCLW and authorities, schools do not always send the most suitable practitioners to attend the courses, namely those key practitioners who have the potential to increase the use of the language within their schools. Additionally, due to the lack of sufficient supply funding, too often, these factors prevent school leaders from releasing staff to attend valuable training.

The initial training provided for education workforce tutors is beneficial and ensures a sound understanding of the work's policy and legislative background. There are purposeful professional learning opportunities in place. Tutors have access to the 'My Learning' platform where resources and guidelines are shared, along with a suitable programme of professional learning through the NCLW '*Academi*', which includes a variety of sessions such as pattern drilling and Confidence Building training. On the whole, provision encourages educators to support and motivate their learners effectively.

National meetings are held every two weeks for education workforce tutors, which provides a valuable forum for sharing information, exchanging practices and ensuring consistency nationally. Through these meetings, tutors receive guidance on processes such as applying for supply funding on behalf of schools, along with support from national officials on developing and building courses. The ongoing support from local providers and the NCLW is an important part of the quality assurance arrangements, helping tutors to use the information recorded in the Personal Development Plan to improve their practice.

Quality assurance arrangements for the intensive learning (sabbatical) provision are well established and very robust, with valuable contributions from the external examiner which strengthens monitoring and evaluation processes.

However, to date, none of this has ensured consistency across the provisions in terms of using the most effective practices of the Welsh for Adults sector.

Providers

Providers have a clear and purposeful vision that supports the development of the Welsh language among school practitioners. This vision aligns effectively with national priorities and provides a sound direction for the work at a local level. By working effectively with

relevant partners, leaders plan and deliver provision that responds well to the needs of schools and education practitioners across the regions.

In some areas, such as Ceredigion, the work is an integral part of a wider strategy to strengthen progression along the language continuum. This includes initiatives such as 'Welsh at Home', which supports parents to develop the use of the Welsh language at home and in the community. There is close co-operation between tutors and individual schools, which helps to ensure regular support for practitioners. Structured aftercare arrangements after block courses also encourage practitioners to continue to use the Welsh language confidently in their daily work.

Quality assurance processes are implemented appropriately in line with the providers' usual procedures, including teaching and learning observations and monitoring of provision. At the same time, leaders ensure that tutors have access to valuable professional development opportunities, such as observing colleagues teaching and participating in national meetings. These opportunities strengthen provision and promote the sharing of effective practices and resources, with tutors adapting national materials successfully to suit local contexts.

There is beneficial communication and co-operation between school leaders and providers. Leaders meet regularly with tutors and discuss progress with the senior leadership team each term. This helps to evaluate the effect of provision and plan the next steps effectively. However, in general, the current arrangements for providing ongoing support (aftercare) are not strategic or consistent enough, for example in terms of communication between school leaders and practitioners who are learning Welsh. As a result of the relatively informal nature of the process, it is difficult to evaluate the effect of provision on pupils systematically and consistently. These arrangements, under the care of the local authorities, are very variable, which means that they are not strategic enough or, at times, do not happen at all.

In a short period of time, the NCLW has led the development of suitable and varied provision successfully across Wales. The quality of provision and teaching are good and there are appropriate procedures in place to deal with aspects that are in need of improvement. However, the main obstacles to the success of this work are outside the responsibilities of the NCLW. These include the lack of funding available for schools to release practitioners, ensuring that schools select the right practitioners to attend the programmes, and the aftercare processes for mentoring and monitoring the linguistic and pedagogical progress of practitioners.

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report refers to different quantities and proportions, e.g. ‘*most learners...*’ or ‘*very few learners...*’. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the provider and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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